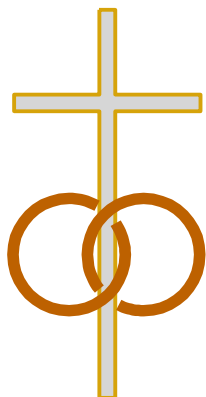
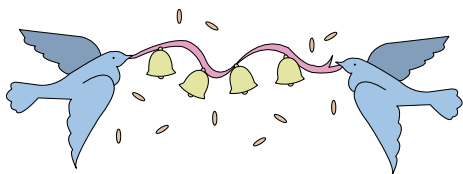


The two

shall become one...



Planning Your Wedding



Our Lady of the Lake Parish
294 Sparta Avenue
Sparta, New Jersey
(973) 729-6107

Our Lady of the Lake Parish
294 Sparta Avenue
Sparta NJ 07871

Phone: 729 - 6107

E-Mail: sierides@ollsparta.org

“From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.”

-Mark 10, 6-9

Congratulations!

The celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is an occasion of special joy for the two of you and also the church. This booklet is for your use. It is intended to help answer some questions you may have about your marriage preparation and your wedding day.

We are ready to assist you in these preparations and will make this sacramental day very special as you begin your life together.

1. Documents

To establish your religion and your eligibility to contract a marriage in the Catholic Church, certain documents and testimony are required by Ecclesiastical Law:

1. Certificate of Baptism (if baptized) issued by the church in which the Baptism was performed, and dated **within six months** of the wedding date.
2. Permission of parent, in case of minors. (Priest administers oath, takes testimony and witnesses signatures.)
3. If previously married, a copy of the marriage certificate, divorce decree and baptism certificate of former spouse or death certificate or decree of nullity.

2. Pre-marital Instructions

Attendance at two courses in marriage preparation is required:

Course 1 - God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage is a series of talks based on Theology of the Body that offers an understanding of God's Plan for marriage and human sexuality. Learn about the beauty of marriage as originally designed, and the gifts husbands and wives are meant to be for one another. This is typically done at the diocesan level.

Course 2: The preparation life skills session(s) offers practical insights and assistance in building a successful marriage. Topics covered include: communication, conflict resolution, family of origin, finances and more.

Visit the St. Paul Inside the Walls website at:

www.insidethewalls.org/guide-to-marriage-preparation

There will be several meetings with the priest. These are scheduled so that we may come to know you better, to feel secure that you are prepared adequately for mature Christian marriage. Marriage is profoundly important both to you and to the society you will enter.

The use of ***FOCCUS*** (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study) can also be a very useful tool in helping you prepare for your marriage. It is an instrument that can help you recognize the areas in which you are strongest and the areas which need greater growth in your relationship with each other. It can most easily, but not accurately, be described as a compatibility test. Consider it a recommended investment in your future.

3. Dispensations

Church law (Canon Law) treats all marriages as though between two Catholics, and that the ceremony is to be in a Catholic Church. Any exceptions to this norm means that a dispensation from the law of the church must be obtained. All dispensations take time, and some take more time than others. Keep this in mind when planning your wedding. The priest or deacon will advise you of any necessary dispensations.

4. Ecumenical Weddings

Non-Catholic ministers are welcome to participate in marriages in the church. Generally the details of such celebrations are worked out with the couple, priest and minister/rabbi during the year of preparation. It is permissible, with a dispensation, for the marriage to be celebrated in the church of the non-Catholic partner. If this is the case, please let the priest know early on in the period of preparation.

5. Date and Time of Ceremony

Wedding dates are given on first-come, first-served basis. Ceremonies are scheduled to avoid conflicts and congestion. We would appreciate your PROMPTNESS on all your appointments with us, especially for the rehearsal and the wedding day itself. We suggest that you plan to be present at least twenty (20) minutes before the ceremony is to begin.

Ceremonies may be scheduled only at times which will not conflict with Parish functions, i.e. no later than 2:30 PM on Saturday. (Confessions begin at 4:00 PM, the church must be available at that time.) Thus if a wedding begins past 2:45 or 3:00 PM, a receiving line and/or pictures will be omitted. It is important to start on or as close to the scheduled time in order to facilitate a joyful celebration and to have pictures.

Before you make any definite commitment for a place for your reception, make sure that the date and time is available for the church ceremony and is verified by the Parish Priest.

Lent, the forty days before Easter, are a somber time in the church's year, a time of prayer and penance. It is not a time best suited for the joyous celebration of a wedding. Weddings held during this time ought to be simple, low key and with little music in keeping with this season.

6. Rehearsal

The time of your rehearsal will be set by you and the priest officiating at your wedding. The following are most needed at the rehearsal:

- a) The Priest performing the ceremony
- b) Bride
- c) Bride Groom
- d) Bride's father (or whomever is to give the Bride away)
- d) Best man and maid/matron of honor
- f) Bridesmaids
- g) Ushers
- h) Ring bearer and/or flower girl
- i) Lectors/readers

Prior to the Rehearsal we ask that you submit:

- a) Marriage License
- c) Church Offering
- d) The fee for the musicians will be discussed with you by the music director.

Impress on all, the need for punctuality. Usually the rehearsal is one of the many scheduled appointments the priest will have, and tardiness in getting started may result in an unsatisfactory rehearsal. Have all those involved in the rehearsal assemble inside, at the doors of the church.

7. Cleaning/Respect of Church

We ask for your help in cleaning up the church after the ceremony. This includes removal of flower boxes, etc. The use of rice, birdseed, or flower petals is **not** permitted. Nothing may be dropped or thrown inside or outside of the church.

8. Confession

Your friends will definitely want to share your joy on your Wedding day and join in prayers for your happiness. You will want them with you at Holy Communion. Opportunity for Confession will be available at the time of rehearsal at your request.

9. In General

If you expect a priest at your wedding reception, extend the invitation well in advance, so that you won't be disappointed when his schedule makes it impossible for him to attend.

If a marriage candle is used by the couple during the ceremony, the Bride and Groom may provide this. We may also have a candle for your use here at the church.

10. Flowers

The amount and type of flowers are left at the discretion of the couple. We ask that after the ceremony you leave them - two bouquets on either side of the tabernacle.

In the event there is more than one wedding on the day of your wedding, the Priest who is making the arrangements will give you the names of the other couple. If you wish, you may arrange to share the cost of the flowers.

If flowers are used as ornamentation on the pews, please inform your florist that they must be secured to the pew by means of elastic, rubber bands, or a piece of wire. Adhesive tape is **NOT** permitted. Florists are permitted to set up flowers no more than 2 ½ hours before the ceremony.

11. Lectors

All readings during the wedding ceremony must be taken from Sacred Scripture. Those who will read the scriptures (Lectors) are obligated to attend the rehearsal.

12. Church Offering

The marriage stipend to the parish is \$1,000. The parish stipend is used to defray the operating expenses of the parish. It must be given at least one month before the wedding and can be combined with the musician fees. (See last page)

13. Visiting Priests

Visiting priests are always welcome to perform your marriage ceremony. However, the parish priest who is making the arrangements should be informed that a visiting priest/deacon will perform the ceremony. Please have the visitor contact the Pastor well in advance of the wedding.

A visiting priest/deacon who is performing the ceremony is obligated to prepare the Bride and Groom for marriage (including the mandated paperwork, as required by the Common Policy of New Jersey and Canon Law).

Visiting Priests are to perform weddings in accordance with the parish guidelines and to conduct the rehearsal.

The visiting Priest must:

- Provide proof of good standing.
- Submit the completed marriage file to the Chancery office of his Diocese.
- His Chancery will approve it and send it to the Diocese of Paterson.
- The Paterson Diocese Chancery will approve it and send it to Our Lady of the Lake Church.
- **This must be done ONE MONTH BEFORE the wedding date.**

14. Photographers

Photographers are welcome at your wedding. If there are specific points in question, have your photographer contact the priest who is making arrangements for your wedding.

Have your photographer check in with the priest immediately before the ceremony. Photographers must ensure that the wedding ceremony begins on time.

Only the couple may come back after the ceremony to pose for pictures as long as it does not interfere with other services.

15. Wedding Ceremony

The details of the ceremony itself, whether it is to be a wedding Mass or a wedding ceremony, will be worked out by you and the celebrant about a month before the wedding date.

Directions to the Church

Westbound from New York City and surrounding areas

Route 80 West to Exit 34B (Route 15 North)

Route 15 North to Exit "Route 517 - Sparta"

Make a left onto 517 North (Sparta Avenue) and continue for about 1½ miles

Our Lady of the Lake is on the left side of the road.

Eastbound from Pennsylvania and surrounding areas

Route 80 East to Exit 34 (Wharton)

Follow directions above for Route 15 to the Church



Guidelines for Wedding Music

Music will be an important part of your wedding celebration. It helps to set a tone for your wedding ceremony and is an expression of your faith. As it expresses your faith and the faith of your assembled guests, it should also help to strengthen that faith.

Your choice of music should reflect the relationship with Christ that the sacrament of Matrimony represents. This means that there is music that *is* appropriate and music that is *not* appropriate for the wedding liturgy. The following guidelines have been established by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy in their document, *Liturgical Music Today*. In this document, the American Bishops suggest that three judgements need to be made about music used in the liturgy. Our Director of Music will assist you with the planning of music.

Who Will Provide The Music?

Please contact our Director of Music, Jackie Reilly at jreilly@ollsparta.org with any questions regarding music. Typically the music selections are planned 5-6 weeks prior your wedding.

The fee for musician services is a separate expense from the offering for the Church. Please understand that since our Liturgical Music Ministers have a contract to provide music for weddings, any use of other outside musicians will require a set (bench) fee of \$250 for our musician's time regardless if they are used for your wedding and must be approved 6 weeks in advance of the wedding. Our musician fee includes cantoring and accompaniment.

SUMMARY OF FEES

Stipend for parish	\$1,000
Music Stipend	\$500

*Bench fee of \$250 for Musician must be paid even if you use a guest musician.

For more details, please contact our Music Director,
Jackie Reilly at: jreilly@ollsparta.org

ALL STIPENDS MUST BE MAILED OR SUBMITTED TO THE
PARISH ONE MONTH BEFORE THE WEDDING.

Use of a credit card incurs a 3% processing fee of \$45.

*Please make check(s) payable to:
Our Lady of the Lake Church*

PLEASE NOTE: Couples who reside in another state must obtain the marriage license in the State of New Jersey. Marriage licenses issued in other states are not valid in New Jersey.

Rev June 2025